

Library in Boston, the Chairman of the Library Foundation, Paul G. Kirk, Jr., and the new Director of the Peace Corps, Mark Schneider, spoke of the importance of the Peace Corps as it launched its year-long, 40th anniversary celebration. Mr. Schneider announced a new initiative to expand the role of Peace Corps volunteers in bringing information technology to the task of reducing poverty in developing countries. He also outlined a plan to expand the Peace Corps' efforts to raise global awareness about HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

It is fitting that this occasion was held at President Kennedy's library. In March 1961, President Kennedy launched the Peace Corps as a new idea to demonstrate that a new generation of Americans was moving into positions of leadership in the United States, and they intended to serve the cause of peace around the world.

The Peace Corps today continues its vital and thriving mission, with 7,400 volunteers serving in 77 countries, including recent missions in South Africa, Jordan, Mozambique and Bangladesh. In the past four decades, more than 150,000 Americans have served as Peace Corps volunteers in 134 countries, promoting peace, education, economic development and international cooperation.

Mr. President, I commend the significant current role of the Peace Corps in involving U.S. citizens in world affairs, and making the world a better place by their efforts. I ask consent that the addresses by Mark Schneider and Paul Kirk be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows:

#### REMARKS OF PAUL G. KIRK, JR.

Thank you, Jim. Good evening. I know this is a special occasion for all of you, but I want you to know that it is an equally special evening for those of us associated with the Kennedy Library. Like each of you, I am also a volunteer in an important cause. And in my responsibilities as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, few privileges are as significant as having the honor to welcome home so many Peace Corps Volunteers to the nation's memorial to President Kennedy.

Senator Kennedy and Mark Schneider agreed that this Library, whose mission it is to honor John Kennedy's public life and career and to perpetuate his passion for service, is the most appropriate site at which to begin the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Peace Corps. And I congratulate you and I am delighted to welcome you all on behalf of the Kennedy Family, our Board of Directors and our dedicated staff.

Here in New England, as you know, we enjoy many seasons. At this time of year, we look forward to the springtime—a season when nature's energy bursts forth, when promise and hope are renewed—when opportunities seem limitless—and when a spirit of confidence and optimism make all of us, regardless of our age, feel younger than our years.

If it could be said that politics also has seasons, 40 years ago there began a season in our history that proved to be—and remains today—the height of America's political

springtime—as the nation, renewed in energy, hope and idealism, responded to the patriotic call to service of the newly elected, youthful 35th President of the United States.

If, as I believe, his 1000 days were "the height of America's political springtime", then it must be said that the planting and the subsequent flowering of the Peace Corps epitomizes all that is the very best in the lasting legacy of that season of service.

On March 1, 1961, 6 weeks after his inauguration, upon signing the Executive Order establishing the Peace Corps, President Kennedy said he was convinced that "We have in this country, an immense reservoir of men and women—anxious to sacrifice their energies and time and toil to the cause of world peace and human progress."

He acknowledged that "life in the Peace Corps will not be easy," but he also promised it would be "rich and satisfying."

"... (E)very young American who participates in the Peace Corps—who works in a foreign land"—he said, "will know that he or she is sharing in the great common task of bringing to man that decent way of life which is the foundation of freedom and a condition of peace."

40 years later, thanks to your service and what you continue to do, his words have a timeless quality.

Tonight, you begin your 40th Anniversary celebration at a Library and Museum that celebrates scholarship and service in John Kennedy's memory each day it opens its doors. His history and yours are preserved here for scholastic research.

We seek to perpetuate his inspiration and yours by the various activities and programs which take place here: the Profile in Courage Award, the Distinguished Foreign Visitors Programs, the forums and symposia promoting public discourse on the issues of our time, the 1st Pres. Debate of general election 2000 which we will co-host with the University of Massachusetts-Boston, the John F. Kennedy Library Corps a youth based community service and leadership program modeled after the Peace Corps itself.

Your own service in the Peace Corps and your presence here tonight speak the mission of the Kennedy Library. At a time when citizen participation, even voting, in the world's greatest democracy, is embarrassingly low, reminding others of the importance of service is at the core of our message.

No group can take greater pride in having lived President Kennedy's mantra that "each individual can make a difference, and all of us must try" than Peace Corps Volunteers. We are honored by your presence, and the country is honored by the difference you have made by your service, and we hope you'll return next year to wind up your anniversary celebration in the tone and spirit and at the place where it begins tonight.

In addition to marking your 40th Anniversary, tonight could also serve as the 30th Reunion of Mark Schneider and myself. As you know, Mark is the second returned Peace Corps Volunteer to head the agency. Upon his return from El Salvador, 30 years ago, Mark and I began working together in the Washington office of Senator Ted Kennedy. Mark came to Massachusetts for the Senator's 1970 campaign and tonight could probably tell you as much about the issues and demographics of this state as could the head of our Chamber of Commerce.

From those days to this, Mark has demonstrated the idealism, energy and leadership qualities reflecting the very best in a career of public service. In key posts at the

Department of State, Pan American Health Organization, and at USAID, Mark's values, his leadership and commitment made a difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of families in other lands who will never know his name.

I can tell you that the Peace Corps is in the hands of the best of individuals under the direction and leadership of a man whose name and values I know well and respect greatly. Please join me in a rousing New England Peace Corps welcome for the Peace Corps' able Director, Mark Schneider.

Mark, as a way of sharing and renewing and celebrating all that was begun by President Kennedy 40 years ago, on behalf of all of us here who seek to remind future generations of his inspiration and to perpetuate his challenge for sacrifice and service, I present this bust of John Kennedy to you, as Peace Corps Director, from the Kennedy Library and Foundation.

It is our hope that this bust will be displayed in the Director's Office not only commemorating this occasion and this Anniversary year but also reminding those in years to come that Peace Corps Volunteers will forever remain the best products of "the height of America's political springtime".

#### REMARKS OF MARK L. SCHNEIDER

I would like to begin by saying on behalf of all our Volunteers serving around the world and all of the thousands of returned Volunteers who continue to serve our communities here at home that we are deeply honored to celebrate the third annual Peace Corps Day at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library. I cannot think of a more appropriate place to celebrate one of President Kennedy's most enduring legacies than this wonderful library.

I would like to express our deep gratitude to Brad Gerratt of the Kennedy Library, and Paul Kirk of the Kennedy Library Foundation, for their generous invitation and co-sponsorship of this event. Let me also thank Doane Perry and the Boston Area Returned Peace Corps Volunteers for also cosponsoring the activities planned for Peace Corps Day in Boston today and tomorrow.

I also would like to say a special thanks to Senator Edward Kennedy, who could not join us but sends his best wishes. As some of you may know, I had the honor of working as a member of Senator Kennedy's staff some years ago. It is a privilege for me to call him both a friend and a mentor. Our country owes Senator Kennedy an enormous debt of gratitude for his years of distinguished public service, his enduring commitment to working people in our society, and his continuing support for the Peace Corps. The work still goes on. The hope has endured and the dream will never die.

Let me welcome all of the returned Volunteers in the audience and thank you for helping us celebrate Peace Corps Day. When President Kennedy signed the Executive Order establishing the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961, he said, "... we have, in this country, an immense reservoir of [such] men and women—anxious to sacrifice their energies and time and toil to the cause of world peace and human progress." And you have proved him right.

Over the years, more than 7,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have been recruited from Massachusetts and its many institutions of higher education. Indeed, just a few weeks ago, we released a list of the top 25 colleges and universities that have produced the most Peace Corps Volunteers currently serving overseas. Massachusetts can take great pride

in the fact that Boston University and UMASS/Amherst were among those top 25 schools. Tufts, Williams and Brandies were among the top ten of small colleges and universities. Massachusetts also can take pride that it elected the first former Peace Corps Volunteer to the United States Senate in 1978, the late Sen. Paul Tsongas, who had served in Ethiopia. His daughter, Ashley, is carrying on the Peace Corps tradition, also serving in Africa.

I am delighted to be with you here at the Kennedy Library to give you a brief update on what is happening at the Peace Corps, to talk about Peace Corps, to talk about Peace Corps Day, and to announce a special initiative for the Peace Corps in the 21st century.

In my view, this is an exciting time to be associated with the Peace Corps. Let me tell you just a few of the many reasons why I say this.

Today, there are more than 7,000 Peace Corps Volunteers serving in 77 countries. In the last month, I have had the chance to visit with some Peace Corps Volunteers in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Guinea, Togo, Ghana and Bulgaria. I am pleased to report that they are doing outstanding development work to improve the lives of people in their communities.

In Guinea, I met with Volunteers who had worked with an NGO and the public health ministry helping to end female genital mutilation, and who convinced an entire area to give up the practice when the women excisers were given an alternative way to earn income. Another Volunteer who had been stung by a bee turned that experience into a women's micro enterprise project that is exporting honey to neighboring countries. I also saw teachers who were helping prepare the next generation of leaders. In Togo, I saw a Peace Corps Volunteer working with a local NGO where skits kept 300 high school students mesmerized as they learned of the killing nature of HIV/AIDS and how to prevent its transmission.

In Ghana, I met Melinda Patterson from Watertown, Connecticut. She is helping her community, Mafia-Dove, build a school. She has also organized a women's water and sanitation committee to introduce clean water and latrines into their community to break the transmission cycle of water-borne diseases that needlessly kill thousands of Ghanaian children under the age of five, each year. I had a special introduction to that community when I was greeted by a celebration there last week. A deputy chief from the EWE tribe formally welcomed me, and as loin-clothed dancers performed, the water-sanitation committee women placed a beaded peace bracelet on my arm and sprinkled it with good luck powder. They understand well the balance between tradition and modern technology and were helpful that the new electric power mainline nearby would reach their community soon.

Across Ghana, Volunteers are working with small businessmen, teaching thousands of high school students and collaborating with their local communities to promote eco-tourism and protect bio-diversity, from protecting the last hippopotamus, to securing national park status for a unique monkey preserve.

My pride in the work of Volunteers was matched by that of the country's leaders. The Ghanaian Vice President—as did almost all leaders I met—recalled the name of a volunteer who had taught him math two decades earlier. He said that Peace Corps Volunteers, then and now, go to the most distant and difficult communities, places where

some of his own countrymen will not live. The Volunteers provide an example of service, of sacrifice. He said we all need to learn that you have to “die a little bit” to help the country progress.

In Bulgaria, where the historic transition to democracy is barely a decade old and where environmental awareness is just awakening, I met Jeremy West, a forestry volunteer from North Carolina working in the beautiful town of Etropole, nestled against snow-capped mountains. In an open town meeting, the mayor and council approved Jeremy's plans, developed with local teenagers, to turn the former communist party headquarters into an environmental resource center where young people will help spotlight the area's bio-diversity and the threat of pollution.

The Peace Corps is alive and well and keeping faith with its legacy. That is why it remains one of the most effective, best-known and widely accepted international volunteer organizations in the world. Each year, we continue to receive more than 100,000 inquiries from people interested in serving in the Peace Corps. We have strong bipartisan support in Congress, and earlier this year, President Clinton proposed a \$30 million increase for our budget.

Those funds are crucial if we are to keep pace with the bi-partisan decision of the Congress, approved last May, to support President Clinton's proposal to restore the Peace Corps to 10,000 Volunteers.

We also are strengthening our ties to Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. After their overseas service, many returned Volunteers continue to serve their own communities through countless volunteer activities. And we thank those of you who help us recruit new Volunteers. Over the next 12 months, we look forward to working with returned Volunteers here in Boston and across the country, as well as with the National Peace Corps Association and other friends of the agency, on plans to celebrate our 40th anniversary in 2001.

Peace Corps Day was started three years ago to shine a spotlight on the agency, the development work of our Volunteers around the world, and the continuing service that returned volunteers across the country bring to their communities here in the United States. And it's been an extraordinary success.

I am pleased to report that tomorrow, according to our best estimates, nearly 12,000 returned Peace Corps Volunteers and educators will lead classroom presentations to more than 500,000 students in our nation's classrooms on Peace Corps Day. These presentations enable young people to learn about what it is like to live in another country, to learn another language, and adapt to a new culture.

Tomorrow, I will visit Woodrow Wilson Elementary School in Framingham, where State Senator David Magnani and I will talk about our own Peace Corps experiences in Sierra Leone and El Salvador. I also will make a trip to Maria Royston's classroom at the Placentino Elementary School in Holliston. Maria, who is here with us tonight, served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Cameroon. She, another returned Volunteer, Tasha Ferraro, and I will speak with her students and then make an international telephone call to a Peace Corps Volunteer who is serving as a teacher in the west African nation of Burkina Faso. This Volunteer, Molly Shabica, who hails from Providence, helps bring the world back home throughout the year by participating in the Peace Corps'

outstanding program, World Wise Schools, which links more than 7,000 teachers here at home to Peace Corps Volunteers serving overseas.

As returned Volunteers speak about their Peace Corps experience, I think the visits they make to classrooms in their communities tomorrow will promote an even larger purpose for our nation's young people: these returned Peace Corps Volunteers stand as examples of the ideal of service. Over the years, virtually every American who has taken the oath to become a Volunteer, and returned home after two years, transforms that oath into a lifetime pledge of public service. This ideal is at the heart of the Peace Corps, and it is what has motivated more than 150,000 of our citizens to answer President Kennedy's call to serve our country and the world.

So I want to thank every returned Volunteer who is participating in Peace Corps Day here in New England and in cities and towns across our country. They are continuing that legacy.

Since I became Director of the Peace Corps, I have thought a lot about what our Volunteers have accomplished over the last 39 years, and what they are doing today in this new and exciting century. We have established a great legacy and tradition of service. Our Volunteers do much to strengthen the ties of friendship and international understanding between Americans and the people of other countries.

If there has been a change over the past four decades, I believe it may be the following. Today's Peace Corps Volunteers have a unique capacity to produce an even greater development impact than their predecessors. They possess new skills and talents that can help the communities where they serve, bridge the digital divide. Our Volunteers can bring the power of information technology to enable hundreds of thousands of people in developing countries learn more, live healthier lives, and earn more income.

Most of our Volunteers who are serving in the Peace Corps are comparative experts in information technology, and many of them already are pioneering computer access in some of the poorest communities in the world.

For instance, Peace Corps Volunteers are helping to set up a cyber cafe in Senegal and a millennium computer literacy project in Ghana for small businesses, that has won international awards. One innovative education Volunteer in Kenya powered his laptop with abandoned solar panels so he could surf the Net in order to help prepare his lesson plans for his students.

A few weeks ago during my trip to Central America, I met an outstanding senior Volunteer who had spent 40 years as a marketing executive at the Goodyear tire company. He served two years as a business Volunteer in Ukraine. Today, he is in his second tour as a business Volunteer in Guatemala, where he is working with a small company that helps Mayan women's cooperatives expand their markets and improve their products. He taught them how to make a web page that now is advertising their traditional fabrics in the E-commerce marketplace.

In Bulgaria, I met Allison Rainville, Angela Roe, and Heidi Berbee. Allison from North Andover, Massachusetts, is teaching English to students in the town of Bourgas. But she also is working with the Bulgarian Red Cross to provide basic computer training to Red Cross workers. Angela, from Stockbridge, Georgia, is working on community economic development and she is helping her

business students link into the Internet for the first time and teaching them how to make their own web page. Heidi, from Minnetonka, Minnesota, is teaching students to use the Internet for research and is giving some of her female students an opportunity to learn about government by e-mailing mayors to ask them about their jobs.

These are just several examples of how Volunteers are using technology to help their communities develop and prosper. But I believe that more can be done. History has taught us that whenever technological advances are made—whether it is electricity, telephones, or modern modes of transportation—the poor tend to benefit last. Globalization is having the same impact. As the developed world moves forward every day with even new advances in technology, the poorest countries and the poorest communities in each country are left farther behind, largely because of lower educational levels. Our Volunteers, with their computer skills and presence in some of the smallest towns can help alter that reality.

That is why I am announcing today a new initiative that will expand the role that our Volunteers play in bringing the power of information technology to the task of poverty reduction. I am asking the Peace Corps' staff at our headquarters and at our overseas posts to place a new and more coordinated focus on technology and develop specific Volunteer projects that will expand the use of information technology, computers, and the Internet in developing countries.

For instance, we will see what more our Volunteers can do to help micro-entrepreneurs explore new markets through technology. Volunteers can work with farmers to use information technology for improving agricultural practices. They can help local health workers use technology to monitor immunization programs for children. Peace Corps Volunteers and teachers can find new ways to bring the Internet into more classrooms. They can work on a wider basis with municipal governments, non-governmental organizations, environmental groups, and youth organizations to bring the power of technology to bear on local problems.

This technology initiative will, in my view, simply give Volunteers the green light to innovate, in bridging the digital divide, while remaining true to the core mission that President Kennedy set out for the Peace Corps—to help the people of the developing world help themselves.

Information technology is not a development panacea to solve the many challenges that confront the world's poorest countries. But it can contribute to new solutions. Nor am I suggesting that the Peace Corps can or should become the financier for computers. That is the task of others.

But the technology skills of Peace Corps Volunteers can, where appropriate, play a significant role in introducing technology to their overseas communities. Our Volunteers can serve as advisers, collaborators, and facilitators for their communities and their counterparts. In that way, the many technology projects that are financed by other organizations can become accessible to students and businesses that are not in the main square of capital cities, but at the end of the road in distant villages.

I also would like to challenge America's information giants to expand their cooperation to respond to computer projects that Volunteers, in collaboration with their students, communities and counterparts, are beginning to develop around the world.

After my trip these last two weeks, I feel even more strongly about two other issues

that I also would like to highlight today. Both are global in nature but each impacts with greatest urgency in Africa.

First, I come here with a great sadness, concern and determination to do something more about the horrendous destruction being caused by HIV/AIDS in Africa. The spread of AIDS is inflicting a terrible and devastating toll on millions of innocent people and preventing many countries from consolidating their gains in economic and social development. Last year, ten times as many people died of AIDS in Africa as were killed in all the continent's wars combined. It will soon double child mortality and reduce life expectancy by 20 years.

The magnitude of the HIV/AIDS devastation is hard to comprehend fully. UNAIDS and other international health organizations report that of the 33.4 million cases of HIV/AIDS reported worldwide; 23.5 million of them are in Africa. There are 7.8 million AIDS orphans, and while the average infection rate in sub-Saharan Africa among adults is 8%, it ranges in some countries up to 26%. Africa has 10% of the world's population and 70% of the world's HIV/AIDS. Already, an estimated 13.7 million Africans have lost their lives to AIDS.

There is no greater humanitarian crisis. There is no greater development obstacle. There is no greater political challenge than adopting effective HIV/AIDS prevention and control strategies in Africa.

For that reason, I was pleased that the country directors in Africa all agreed to explore how to incorporate a health education component on HIV/AIDS into every program. Almost all of our programs in health do. Now we must take the next step. We simply have to find additional ways to assist the countries where we serve to do even more in their efforts to reduce the spread of AIDS.

Secondly, three decades ago, Peace Corps Volunteers played an important role in the successful international effort to eradicate smallpox. More recently, they have made significant contributions to the world's efforts to eradicate Guinea worm.

Today, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and Rotary International are embarked on a major project to eradicate polio by the year 2005. Given that many of our Volunteers serve in remote areas of their countries, Peace Corps will seek to become part of this international effort to eradicate polio. Some of our Volunteers already help organize immunization campaigns in their villages. We will be expanding these immunization efforts in countries where the threat of polio still exists, collaborating with national immunization efforts that are part of the global campaign. The Peace Corps would be making yet another enormous contribution to protecting children from the devastating impact of a preventable disease.

President Kennedy said in his second State of the Union, "I sometimes think that we are too much impressed by the clamor of daily events. . . . Yet it is the profound tendencies of history and not the passing excitement that will shape our future." The Peace Corps has been addressing those profound tendencies of history over the past four decades. With your help, I have no doubt that Volunteers will continue to do so as we enter this 21st century.

So as I said a few moments ago, this is an exciting time to be a part of the Peace Corps. I am thrilled to be its Director and I am delighted that so many of you could be here with us to celebrate Peace Corps Day.

Thank you very much.●

#### HOPE NETWORK, S.E. FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Hope Network, S.E., an organization which will hold its Fifth Anniversary Celebration on April 9, 2000. Since it opened in 1994, Hope Network, S.E. has provided disabled and disadvantaged individuals of Oakland, Macomb, and Wayne Counties not only with places to live, but, more importantly, with communities to live in.

Hope Network, S.E. is a member organization of the Hope Network, which employs more than 2000 people and operates from more than 130 different locations throughout the state of Michigan. The mission of Hope Network is to enhance the dignity and independence of people who have disabilities and/or are disadvantaged. The foundation of its efforts is the belief that every individual is created in the image of God and therefore has intrinsic worth and dignity.

The primary goal of Hope Network, S.E. is to provide the highest quality of living for people with disabilities. This is done by respecting the dignity and independence of these individuals, by giving them the opportunity to offer input and make decisions about their own personalized plan of service. The success of Hope Network, S.E. lies in this process, for it is a process which encourages disabled individuals to become involved in community and social activities.

Part of the Fifth Anniversary Celebration is an art show and auction. The pieces of art on display were created at The Art Experience, a gallery in Oakland County which offers art therapy for mentally ill individuals. Its biggest client, not surprisingly, is Hope Network, S.E. Employees of Hope Network, S.E. transport individuals, men and women who usually do not like to stray far from their homes, twenty-five miles to The Art Experience. I am told that it is a place where disabilities, though they do not disappear, are briefly forgotten.

Mr. President, I applaud Hope Network, S.E. Executive Director Pat Crandall, and her many employees and volunteers, for five years of successful service to Oakland, Macomb and Wayne Counties. Their dedication and selfless efforts have touched numerous lives and indelibly left their mark on these communities. On behalf of the entire United States Senate, I wish Hope Network, S.E. a happy fifth anniversary. I hope that the coming years are as successful as the first five have been.●

#### WAYNE METRO DIVISION OF THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE HONORS MS. DIANE RANSOM-MCGHEE

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today in honor of Ms. Diane Ransom-